



# Poor Man's Bread and Principles of Life

By

**NAND KAVI**

of

BOMBAY, INDIA

*With an Introduction by*

**Poet YONE NOGUCHI**

*Professor of Literature, Keio University*

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**JAPAN EDITION**  
(English—Original)

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by NANDLAL V. KAVI alias "Nand Kavi"  
THE AUTHOR



## INTRODUCTION

MY recent visit to India makes me naturally interested in the work of the Indian writer, Nand Kavi. Literature, when it is true and good, shines with its inner light, because not as a monstrosity or freak, but as a creation of idealism it is based on the fundamental philosophy. I was glad to find wonderful suggestions in India that life was nothing without a philosophic background. Even a tree there will show you a way, I thought, how to free from petty bonds and how to respond to life's true meaning. I had seen so many mango groves where, after the fashion of a philosopher in meditation each tree sat with stooping shoulders.

When Kavi tries in the present book to uplift life to a higher plane through sympathizing with the depressed and illuminating what is love and manly spirit, he is conforming with the true Indian tradition.

Dwelling on the everyday feature of life, he is far beyond superficial actuality.

I know that there are already many people who praised Nand Kavi as a born poet, as a poet of

## INTRODUCTION

vision, as a philanthropic nationalist and as an artist of dramatic talent.

He is a student of practical Yoga, practical Philosophy, Art and Literature, believing more in nature cure, and handling several Indian languages with equal efficiency, wherein his poems appear fit to set to music. Through humanitarian views, he links the old with the young. And since life's philosophy is universal, "Poor Man's Bread and Principles of Life" as a piece of useful literature, will fit the schools and colleges and stages all over the world.

*Yours sincerely,*

October, 1936.

**“Mr. Nandlal V. Kavi has a decided talent as a scenario writer and deserves great success”**

**Professor Ernest P. Horwitz**  
of Hunter College, New York City,  
appointed as Government of Bombay research-  
lecturer for 1928 on Indo-Iranian antiquities  
for the Bombay University, India.

## KAVI'S WORKS

NAND TARANG (*Miscellaneous songs*)

RASKUNJ (*Collection of six books*)

SNEH DARPAN (*A three-act drama*)

BANSI RASVIIHAR (*Scenario in songs*)

TATWA PRAKASH (*A philosophic episode of six hundred lines*)

HASYA RANG (*A one-act comic play*)

PRAKIRNA (*Assorted songs*)

RASHTRA GEET }  
RUN SHING } National songs.

SANGRAM }  
DHARMA YUDDHA } National literature.

POOR MAN'S BREAD (*A five-act scenario play*)

*The following will be published shortly :*

DIVINE LOVE (*A Scenario play in seven acts*)

THE CREATOR AND HIS UNIVERSE (*An ideal picture  
of the automatic world*)

## PREFACE

It was in 1928 that I was first inspired to write some scenarios in English. Although it was quite beyond my reach to write freely in a foreign language, the inspiration was such that I could neither ignore nor check it. My thought concerning it began to develop and come with such rapidity and force that I had to submit to the call and undertake the task without the least hesitancy, because of my inability to write fluently in a foreign language. Within a few days, to my own astonishment, I had finished two scenarios, of which this was the first. The next was a mythological one, called "The Divine Love." I had them typed and began with the third one, on a social subject.

I was living in Bombay after the year 1913, while my other books, poetic scenarios and dramas in Indian vernacular languages, were being printed on a well-known press. But after the national war of non-violence was declared by the Indian National Congress, my whole energy was given to that sacred cause. This inspired my national enthusiasm, from which came a few more national songs and booklets relating to the war.

As for this scenario, "The Poor Man's Bread, and Principles of Life," I did not at first think of publishing it in book form, judging it to be of no interest to the public in general, espe-

## PREFACE

cially in India, the original names and the structure of the play being Indian, while the language was English. It seemed rather presumptuous for me to lay claim to clear and correct expression of my ideas in a foreign tongue. But when I saw Prof. Ernest P. Horwitz of Hunter College, New York City, who in 1928 was appointed by the Bombay Government as research-lecturer on Indo-Iranian antiquities at Bombay University, he consented to examine and criticize the scenarios. On the third day, to my great surprise, I was invited to his room and found him so much interested in my works that he encouraged me to get them screened under expert supervision. As for myself I was not satisfied with this work, as it related to India only. I was thinking, "Why should it not be for the world stage?" But as explained above, I could not until now concentrate my energy on this subject.

While visiting in Japan for the past few months, seeing interesting places, talking with friends and discussing this subject, I was again inspired to attempt the completion of this work as soon as possible, and put it before the public in book form in memory of my visit to Japan.

The play itself is a tragic one, though dealing in a simple way with a social philosophic subject. The principles of a world view of society are here applied to practical life. Every possible care has been taken to make it interesting, without losing the sentiment lying at the heart of the story. The sympathetic reader may not be able at times to keep back the tears.

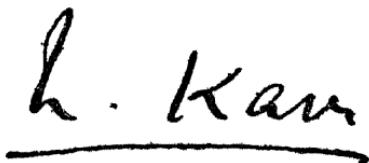
## PREFACE

It is intended purely for the uplift of human life to a higher plane, illuminating what love and real manly spirit is, without the least prejudice, ill-will or bad motive behind, towards any particular world power, although, similar examples of the constant struggle for existence, (the rich and the mightier exploiting in some way or other the nation's cause, and taking undue advantage of the helplessness of the real artisans—the actual labourers, making a big profit out of their arts, while the artisans themselves are actually starving), are found actually going on among individuals and nations in everyday life, this play stands quite independent of those things, on its own merits.

To participate in the solution of the problem, those who relish the idea will surely do their utmost to give it the widest scope on all the stages of the world, by staging, screening and using the books for prize distribution and school-literature.

Suggestions for staging and filming "The Poor Man's Bread" will be found at the back of the book on page 99.

I thank all my friends who have helped me in this work.



h. kau

Tokyo, Japan.

November, 1936.

*The Author*



THE PLAY



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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

*With different names for different stages*

| <i>Indian</i>                | <i>Other Stages</i> | <i>Japanese</i> |
|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| <b>A=Adityanath (Aditya)</b> | <b>Ajit</b>         | <b>Ajii</b>     |

A philanthropic architect; stout, muscular sturdy, determined, temperate, man of principles, with clean shaven face, sandy hair, presenting forehead, fair complexion, bright, dark brown, deep thinker's eyes, of age about forty, wearing ordinary workman's simple dress.

|                               |              |                |
|-------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>K=Kusumchandra (Kusum)</b> | <b>Kosum</b> | <b>Kichiro</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------|----------------|

The only son of A; like his father, a gallant, brave handsome, sympathetic, resolute, benevolent, promising youth adopting his father's principles of life and putting them into practice, rising from an ordinary clerk to a multi-millionaire; his age varying from five to twenty-five.

|                            |              |             |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| <b>J=Jyotinath (Jyoti)</b> | <b>Jyoti</b> | <b>Jiro</b> |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------|

Friend of A; a business man, a contractor; believing in money only, of average-build, luxurious character, handsome, wearing nice up-to-date dress, thinking and talking of worldly things only, always found with spectacles on, cigar on lips, and a beautiful stick in hand, of about the same age as that of A.

|                                  |             |              |
|----------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>V=Vinod-chandra (Vinubha)</b> | <b>Vino</b> | <b>Viwao</b> |
|----------------------------------|-------------|--------------|

A banker, conducting a firm of well-established reputation, V & Co. in Strange Land; a grown man of character, master of K, a staunch follower of A, a typical gentleman having silver hair and bright blue well-read eyes, not very strong, but healthy; of age about sixty.

|  |                 |                |
|--|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>L=Lalan</b>   | <b>Lalan</b>    | <b>Lenzo</b>   |
| A friend of J, a flatterer; man of no principles; of a helpful character to a certain extent, of age about forty-five.   |                 |                |
| <b>B=Banku</b>   | <b>Banko</b>    | <b>Benke</b>   |
| Husband of H; a crack, whimsical, hopeless house-master.   |                 |                |
| <b>R=Ramesh</b>  | <b>Ramei</b>    | <b>Rentaro</b> |
| Husband of G of a most suspicious character.<br>(A child, court clerks, thief, police, army, hospital and hotel management, etc.)  |                 |                |
| <b>M=Monghima (Maji)</b>   | <b>Old Ma'm</b> | <b>Obaba</b>   |
| Mother of A; a pious old lady, having a strong, well-built body, hard-working and sympathetic, obliging nature, living a simple life, of age varying from fifty-five to seventy-five.  |                 |                |
| <b>S=Saroj</b>   | <b>Saro</b>     | <b>Sumiko</b>  |
| The only daughter of V, the banker, and the beloved of K; beautiful, loving, sober, chaste, trained, having enchanting, beautiful blue-black eyes, a fair face, pointed nose, rosy cheeks, black glossy curly hair, curved eyebrows, and melodious tinkling voice; of about the same age as K. |                 |                |
| <b>I=Induba</b>  | <b>Countess</b> | <b>Indira</b>  |
| A countess, a typical house-wife; of grand dignity, wearing simple gorgeous costumes, of age about thirty.   |                 |                |
| <b>D=Dahikuwar (Dahi)</b>  | <b>Daikur</b>   | <b>Dimiko</b>  |
| A somewhat proud neighbour of M.   |                 |                |
| <b>H=Hirakuwar (Hira)</b>  | <b>Heera</b>    | <b>Hiroe</b>   |
| The beautiful and chaste wife of a hopeless husband.   |                 |                |
| <b>G=Gangagauri (Ganga)</b>  | <b>Gauri</b>    | <b>Ginie</b>   |
| A young lady of commanding beauty and stable character, wife of a very suspicious husband.<br>(Maids, girls, a dancing girl, nurses, hotel servers, etc.)  |                 |                |

## SYNOPSES

*A=Adityanath a philanthropic architect is working with his fellows in a village near a town. The finest architectural work is being prepared for a show room in a large work-shop. It is noon time and they get out their poor lunches. A pleads before God, for the neglected artisans of the world, as if beseeching him to look at his creatures striving for bread and then be a bit more merciful towards them. J=Jyoti comes to see his friend and glancing at his worn clothes and seeing his customary gloomy state of mind, pities him and suggests saving money from his earnings for rainy days and for the welfare of his children, instead of wasting it on the wretched poor. A is firm in his principles. J then requests him to join him as a partner in his work as a building contractor. A agrees to this while sticking to his own principles.*

*J makes a profit of one thousand pounds net, but taking the whole profit to himself submits false accounts to A. A has an old mother and a five-year-old child. Every morning beggars crowd at his cottage to receive daily alms. His simplicity of life, his training of his child, his philanthropic, benevolent, hard-working nature, his humanitarian*

## *Synopses*

*views, his intense love and feelings for the depressed, his philosophic principles of life put actually into practice, attract the public in general to his poor cottage.*

*A saves the life of a traveller's child, who, after that, takes keen interest in his life and becomes his disciple.*

*About two years later, A's cottage suddenly bursts into flames, and while saving his mother and the child, he dies of the burns leaving an unusual legacy for his only child in the form of mere instructive blessings, everything to a rag having been burnt by the fire.*

*J is enjoying life in a very far off land wasting national wealth in every possible way. M—the old Ma'm passes her days in spinning and grinding corn, thus earning petty wages for her and the child's maintainance. J returns from his voyage after a year, and visits A's cottage to console the old Ma'm. Child K=Kusum, Hearing the name papa after so long a period, and seeing a familiar face clings to J's neck affectionately and complains in his sweet childish appealing ways about the dry bread he has received throughout his father's absence etc. J's heart is moved, his eyes are filled with tears; he sees the shadow of A. His conscience smites him, and he begs M—the old Ma'm to let K=*

## *Synopses*

*Kusum, live with him under his personal care. M is not prepared to part with her child. J urges her, too, to stay with him at his place and after much persuasion, she agrees to it. The child is very smart and sensitive. He stands first always in his studies. The school boys envy him. Some seven years later while taking part in school activities K attains first place and wins the prize. The other boys object to it, saying, "He is an orphan and has no right to join the gentlemen's party". The sensitive child feels it. He goes home in a rage and threatens suicide, if his real parents are not revealed to him. M—the old Ma'm has to disclose all the facts. The boy is now about fifteen. He decides to stand on his own legs; applies for a job in Strange Land and gets the post. While reading in the library he comes across an article by his father on the principles of life," in which he is deeply interested. He gets the clippings of the article and the news in pictures. J—Jyoti is aghast when he learns of all this. After much debate, he appreciates the boy's intelligence and secures M's sanction, too, for his departure. K starts for Strange Land on a monthly salary of two pounds only, with free passage, receiving one pound in advance, which he gives to his mother, asking her to stay in his own cottage as usual. In the firm of Messrs*

## *Synopses*

*V & Co., The most respectable Bankers in Strange Land, K=Kusum works diligently. His efficiency, straightforward ways, obliging, benevolent nature, and shrewd understanding of his duties, and independent way of thinking, win the heart of his master V=Vinodchandra. From the very first month he is allowed a salary of three pounds instead of two and it is increased gradually. From an ordinary post he attains that of cashier and manager of V's Granary and Shrine. V's only daughter falls in love with him. M lives her simple life in her own cottage giving alms to the poor as usual from the amount she receives regularly every month for her maintainance from K, and praying God for his welfare. J loses everything in theft. He is forced by his creditors to file insolvency and vacate his house. He realises the truth of the sayings of A, and finds shelter only at the poor cottage of the old Ma'm. He now believes in the principles of A, and desires to follow them strictly in the future. The police investigate the theft. V=Vinod takes K=Kusum to a shrine owned by him, in which K finds, to his great astonishment, the statue of his own father and his historical pictures painted on its walls. He washes the feet of the statue with tears of joy, and suggests the addition of one more picture to complete the historical facts. V is amazed*

## *Synopses*

and seems much pleased to see *K* also taking so much interest in such matters. *V*—*Vinod* overhears the innocent love talk passing between his daughter *S*—*Saroj* and *K*—*Kusum*, studies minutely *K*'s nature by testing him in his own peculiar way, and on being satisfied, marries them. He retires from worldly matters, leaving his affairs entirely to the good judgement of *K*. *J*'s house is put on the auction block by the court's order. Rejoicing at the unexpected help received in the nick of time from *K*, *J* bids twenty-five pounds more for *K* and takes its possession amidst the astonishment of the bidders. He pays off half of his debts in cash and promises to pay the remainder by instalments.

*K* devises a scheme for the poor and the depressed. He establishes a poor men's free art college from which a number of experts find their way to independent living every year; which is an ideal one in its way. *S*—*Saroj* is pregnant. At the request of the Home Minister on behalf of the government, *Kusum* leaves the Institute under Government Trust. The mismanagement gives birth to the Artisans Independence League.

The thief is caught and sentenced. Many of the lost articles are found and handed over to *J*, who declares the income of the whole property to be used in charity, which makes a remarkable change

## *Synopses*

*in his position in life. He still lives with the old Ma'm.*

*K=Kusum leads the campaign to take possession of the Institute by peaceful means. Many artisans are wounded by the police's repression. K is fatally wounded. It has changed into a mass revolution. The police in despair await the next order. K succeeds in convincing his beloved S of the eternity of the soul, transitariness of earthly things and impressing upon her mind the duties and importance of human life; but he seems anxious about his old mother. He sends her a wire to come immediately accompanied by J, and to bring a coat for him prepared by one who is entirely happy. M runs along the streets of the village and the adjoining town in search of real happiness. She sees a number of people whom she had thought to be quite happy; but to her great astonishment and sheer despair she finds nothing but misery under the veneer of apparent happiness. She feels that she herself is happier than those people and returns home with the cloth. She comes to Strange Land accompanied by J. The nation grieves at the death of K=Kusum. All citizens join in his funeral procession. M and J arrive in time. They see it from a distance and go direct to the burial ground. M runs straight to K's corpse, kisses it*

### *Synopses*

*again and again, the tears streaming down her cheeks. S=Saroj has given birth to a male child. A friend of K gives M his last letter addressed to her. She kisses the letter with closed eyes, and regaining strength, exclaims, "Yes, child! I am quite convinced that the world is full of sorrows and anxieties. He alone is happy whose life is for the public; he is living, indeed, the need of whose presence is felt by the nation; death is nothing but a change in the outward visible shape, I know; still, I have a motherly heart!" [Her heart fails.]*

*The beautiful face of the child is seen at the feet of A=Adityanath.*

# POOR MAN'S BREAD

AND

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE

---

ACT FIRST

SCENE I

*AT NOON*

*[In a village situated near a town, A=adityanath is seen working with his fellow brethren. His clothes are worn. His face seems unshaven. The finest architectural work is being prepared for a show room in a big work shop. It is just time for lunch and they take out their bread etc.]*

**A**—[takes out his own food (some pieces of bread and pickles), rests on his left side with folded legs, the right one hanging over the left, the ball of the right foot touching the ground and its sole in the back of the left foot, holding a piece of

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act. I

*bread loosely in the right hand above the right knee, the fore-arm resting on the thigh, and the outstretched left arm resting on its loose palm, in a melancholy mood, with a deep sigh looking at the sky]. [See Frontispiece].*

Oh, Mightiest One! See, how Thy creatures strive for bread!!

*[The artisans are seen taking their poor lunch in different quarters].*

What to say of ordinary ones! Even the best artisans get hopelessly poor wages, one fourth of which at least, they spend on some stimulating drink, striving to get rid of the worries of the day.

*[Scenes of peasants tilling farms; workmen picking cotton-nuts and silk-cocoons, spinning and weaving cotton, silk and wool on wheels and hand looms; porcelain and pottery, cloisonne and damascene shops; glass and metal hand-work shops; printing shops and some gigantic machinery pass quickly one after the other from his sight throughout, and the same are displayed on the screen].*

The peasants, spinners and weavers, potters and printers, workmen and artisans of every description are toiling day and night, and still they don't get even a stomachful of dry bread. People call them mad! Mad they are, indeed, to sell their energy so

Act I] POOR MAN'S BREAD

cheap! The rich make a hundred times profit out of their arts, and still they dare call them mad!

Why? Because Thee made them rich and kept us poor! Is it fair?

*[J—Jyotinath enters with spectacles on and a stick in his hand]*

**J**—Good-afternoon, Aditya!

**A**—*[gaining his balance somehow, receiving J]*  
Good-afternoon.

**J**—*[looking at A's worn clothes and gloomy state of mind]* Are you still the same?

**A**—*[trying to smile with an affirmative slight jerk of head]* I rather like to remain as such!

**J**—*[with impressive look]* The world worships money, my friend, and not the art! Care for yourself and see how the world cares for you! Save some money and happiness will be searching shelter at your feet! Let the wretched have their own fate! Why worry about them?

**A**—*[with a deep sigh, pitying J's state of mind]* Enough of it, Jyoti! I've thought over all this and conclude the reverse of it.

**J**—Then no hope for you! Will you join as a partner in my building contract?

**A**—Gladly, as a working partner, receiving daily wages in cash, partner in profit only.

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act I

J—Yes, good pay and a fair share in profit, too.

A—Then the poor will rejoice more!

[*A bell rings and the artisans are again busy with their work*] Good-bye!

[*J returns it with a jerk of the head and departs*]

J—[*leaving*] How foolish!

## SCENE II

WINTER MORNING:—

[*A—Adityanath is cobbling his worn shoe on his one-storey cottage verandah. K—Kusum-chandra, five years old, is sitting by his side. Beggars gather there to receive daily alms*]

A—[*turning his head a bit towards the door*] Mother! Why keep these poor people waiting? Let them have their share.

[*M—the old Ma'm brings some corn and begins giving them in handfuls, receiving blessings in return*]

Beggars—God bless you! May God give you prosperity and happiness! Long live the child!

K—[*Running after M*] Amma, let me give!

[*takes some corn in his tiny basket and gives to the smaller ones. All leave but an old man*]

Act I] POOR MAN'S BREAD

**Old Man**—[turning towards *A*] God bless you with prosperity! Will you oblige me, sir, with a torn garment? [*His body shakes with cold*]

*[A with a sigh, quietly enters the house to bring his bed sheet. He is seen taking it from the bed, and returning with it]*

[Meanwhile]

**K**—Why do you tremble, sire? Do you feel cold?

**Old Man**—Yes, child, long live and prosper!

**K**—Wait! Papa is bringing something for you. Why not wear shoes, too? Have these. [*Offers him his father's pair of shoes*]

**Old Man**—No, child! Let them be there.

**K**—Don't fear! I'll tell papa. He is stout enough.

**A**—[*Returning with the bedsheet and glad at heart at the scene*] What is it, Kusum?

**K**—Dear papa, how can this old man walk without shoes in such cold? You are stout enough; aren't you? You can do without them. He seems afraid of you. Tell him, papa, to take these, and give him that, too! Poor old man!

[*The old man's and A's eyes fill with tears*]

**A**—[*wiping his eyelashes*] Give them to him; he'll take them now.

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act I

[*The old man accepts both the things with signs of blessings and leaves. Shouts and uproar of people is heard. A listens to it, leaves his work and runs to the place*]

### SCENE III

#### THE POND:—

[*People are seen gathered round a big pond where a traveller's child has just slipped in. Nobody dares or wishes to jump into its deep water and endanger himself for the noble cause. The child appears and disappears in the water. The traveller loses his senses, and is attended to by some of the passers-by. A—Aditya is seen running to the scene. He arrives, inquires, takes in the situation in a glance, plunges into the water, and brings the child out. She is senseless. He takes the body by the legs, and turns it around swinging the head up and down. It ejects water. He takes the child home and gives medical treatment. The traveller comes to his senses and is directed by a passer-by to A's place, where he finds the child just regaining her senses (opening her eyes as if in search of some one); the traveller is very grateful to A*]

Act I] POOR MAN'S BREAD

K—Papa, let her live here! I'll give her my share of milk.

A—[taking K in his lap] She must live with her papa!

K—Let him, too, stay here for some time. Poor child! She is sick.

SCENE IV

ONE EVENING:—

[A building is reaching completion. The last finishing work is being done. J=Jyoti and A=Aditya enter; J with a cigar in one hand and a stick in the other, smoking and speaking at the same time. A is in his usual ordinary dress. Both walk round the building, go up and inspect the work]

J—[knocking the ashes from his cigar] The work is nearly completed, but we failed in our estimate.

[puffing out smoke and taking out an account sheet from his pocket] Two hundred pounds loss.

[shows it]

A—[with a decisive look] Well, my department is quite safe, and my estimate quite correct. You calculated yours wrongly and you must suffer for it.

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act I

J—[as if urging] It is not fair, Aditya! I've paid you nicely and you must share consequential loss.

A—[with a smile] How foolish! As you paid me so did I work; and the poor have had joy during the time. I have saved nothing for myself.

J—[as if astonished] Is it true?

A—[calmly] I never increase my liabilities, as you know, by storing up such uncertain earthly things.

J—[still more astonished] May I know your principles of life, Aditya?

A—[taking out an article from his pocket] Here it is, just ready for publication.

[J simply glancing at it returns it with a smile.

A, putting it into his pocket bids good-bye]  
Good-bye!

[They shake hands and part]

J—[with a pitying look] Poor Aditya! How unlucky! Out of the double wages, too, he could save nothing. If I disclose to him the real facts, he will expect some share of it to distribute among the beggars. Beggars are beggars after all. They cannot be made rich by giving them wealth. One thousand pounds net profit in this one bargain. Ah! I feel tired of these worries now. I must have some rest. Let me go somewhere, for a change, and enjoy life!

## SCENE V

After two years

*LATE AT NIGHT:—*

[*A's=Adityanath's cottage is on fire. He is returning home and sees the fire*]

**A**—[undressing himself in haste] Haloo, haloo! Fire! [enters the burning house, awakens his mother and sends her out. The flames increase.]

Help! Help! A bedsheets!

[*One of the neighbours brings a bedsheets. Four of them, one at each corner, holds it spread. A =Aditya throws his child K=Kusum, from the window who is caught safe in it. He covers his body with a carpet, and rushes out; but it catches fire. Many people gather there: some are attending him, others try to extinguish the fire with bucketfuls of water, but to no effect. A lies on a cot. His agony increases*]

Ah! Mother! Oh God! Oh! Oh! Mother! Mother! I am dying! [gaining strength] No, I will never die! But I must leave this body! It's almost burnt!

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act I

M—[with a sigh, and tears in her eyes] God is gracious, my child! Why lose courage? You will be cured shortly. The Doctor is coming.

[*Neighbours plaster the burnt portion and fan him*]

A—No, mother! I must leave very soon. Where is the child?

[*The child is brought near him. His gentle hand moves softly on its innocent forehead upwards to the back part of its head*]

Dear babe! Live long and make a name in the world! Whatever I earned is spent for the good; whatever was saved is taken away by the fire as its share.

[*The child sighs. The mother sheds tears*]

Be brave! Take care of thy inferiors and the Superior shall care for thee. Don't idle away time in taking care of thyself only. If thou doest that, none will care for thee; not even God, and thou shalt be ruined. In short be benevolent, not selfish, and the world is thine. This is the only legacy I leave for thee by way of blessing. Ah! It's distressing! Let it be so! Good-bye to one and all! Om! Om!

[*The child and the mother cry bitterly. The funeral is managed by the neighbours, friends*

Act. II] POOR MAN'S BREAD

*and well-wishers, and a temporary roof is erected on the same place]*

ACT SECOND

SCENE I

ONE NIGHT:—

*[In a very far off land J—Jyotinath is found enjoying life, wasting the nation's wealth in all possible ways. The Race Course time is just over; people are anxious about the results. The numbers of the winning horses appear on the board. Some rejoice; some are seen in great despair. J has lost all the games, but is trying to keep up the etiquette. He takes out a cigar and calls for a taxi. He drives in the taxi through all main roads of the town and returns to the great hotel at night. Friends are seen waiting for him. He receives them at the dining table. They all enjoy beer bottles, etc. The dance begins and all make a show, as if they understand the art. A hotel attendant delivers a wire to J, its contents being "A died last night, house on fire."]*

J—[With a sigh] Poor Aditya!

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act II

*[The dance is over. J continues his tour about twelve months more]*

### SCENE II

After one year

*AT HOME:—*

*[M—the old Ma'm passes her days in spinning and grinding corn, thus earning petty wages for her and the child's maintainance. She is reeling thread from the spinning wheel. Two women neighbours bring their corn for grinding. Another one comes to receive flour. She gives the flour, receiving a few coins, thanking them for the same, and is again busy grinding the fresh corn and praying God at the same time]*

**M**—Oh God! Thou art gracious!

Thou art gracious!!

Thou protectest the birds and the beasts!

The dumb and the helpless!

Thou art the shelter of mine!

Thou art the shelter of mine!!

Whom should I ask? Where should I go?

Guide me, oh! Merciful One!

Oh! Merciful One!!

Act II] POOR MAN'S BREAD

K—[*Comes running from outside*] Mother, let me grind!

M—No, dear! You can't.

K—Then, give me milk. Why don't you buy milk?

M—Yes, child! I'll buy it for you.

K—Mamma, will you not buy me a slate and pen? See, how other boys go to school and learn! Why don't you send me to school?

M—Yes, child! I'll do everything for you.

K—Mamma, see how hungry I am! [*Showing his empty belly*] Will you give me something to eat?

M—[*taking from the nearer shelf a piece of bread*] Yes, dear! Here it is for you.

K—[*taking the piece in his hand*] See, how dry it is! I can't eat it so!

M—Wait! [*She goes to a neighbour with a small pot, taps the door and the hostess appears. K follows her*] Will you please give a little curd for my Kusum?

**Hostess**—[*with a disgusted look, brings and pours a little whey into her pot, remarking*] People ought to know, others have also to manage for their own children.

[*M receives it with a deep sigh. The sensitive child feels it.*]

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act II

K—No, mother! Give it back. I am sorry. I won't ask for such any more.

*[The hostess feels ashamed of herself and disappears into the house. K takes the pot from M's hand and empties it into some pot in the house and returns. He plays outside, while M is again busy with her spinning wheel. J enters]*

J—[having entered] Good-afternoon, mother!

M—[spinning on the wheel, receiving J by a slight jerk of the head] Good afternoon.

J—[taking his seat on a mat] What was wrong with Aditya, mamma?

M—It was our misfortune, child! What else? The cottage caught fire. He entered it to save our lives and suffered the worst.

J—Where is the child?

M—Kusum, child! Come here! Papa is calling you.

K—[comes running in rejoicing] Papa! Where is papa? [embraces J]

Ah, papa! Where were you? Why did you leave us that day? Don't leave us now. Or, take us with you. See, mother has never given me milk since that day! Only dry bread! That's what she gives. Now you must give me a slate and a pen. I'll go to school.

## Act II] POOR MAN'S BREAD

*[J's heart is moved, his eyes are filled with tears. He sees the shadow of A=Aditya]*

**J**—*[trying to hide the tears]* Yes, child! You shall have everything.

*[turning to M]* Mother, let Kusum be with me; I'll take every care of him, and give him a proper education.

**M**—No, child! He is all my hope in life. God is great!

**J**—Then you, too, can live with him at my place.

**M**—God bless you! I am quite happy here, child! Thank you very much.

**J**—No, mother! I cannot but take you to my place, and you shouldn't refuse it. Although I am not rich, God has given me enough to maintain the forlorn family of my friend. You can quit the place if discomforted in the least. Hurry up! Everything will be alright.

**M**—*[with a deep sigh]* Oh God! I take it to be thy desire only!

*[She prepares to go with J]*

## SCENE III

*J'S COTTAGE:—*

*[A tutor imparts education to K=Kusum. He*

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act II

*seems to be much pleased at his smartness. J—  
Jyoti is reading a newspaper]*

**Tutor**—His memory is so good that nothing requires repetition.

**J**—[emitting a puff of smoke from his cigar] If he completes this book in one month, I'll give him a good prize.

**K**—Oh! Papa! I can complete two books like this in one month!

[*J smiles*]

## SCENE IV

After seven years

*IN SCHOOL:—*

*[School boys are playing. It is arranged “one who reaches a particular place first, will get some prize.” K—Kusum stands first on the spot]*

**K**—I get the prize, I stand here first.

**Others**—No, you get away from there. You are an orphan.

**2nd**—Pooh, a beggar!

**3rd**—Of quite a low reputation!

**4th**—You can have your way somewhere else. This is a gentlemen's party.

## Act II] POOR MAN'S BREAD

5th—Quite true. He always stands first in class, too. Teachers pity him, because he is an orphan. Quite good!

K—[in wrath] I'll tell everything to my papa!  
[goes away]

All—[laughing] Hurrah! Hurrah!

## SCENE V

M'S APARTMENT:—

[M—*The old Ma'm is preparing for bread in her apartment in J's=Jyoti's cottage. K=Kusum comes in wrath*]

K—[in wrath] Mamma! Mamma! Where art thou?

M—Here I am, child! Come hither!

[K goes into her apartment with an unusually angry look]

M—[with her usual affectionate tone] What's wrong with you, child? Sit down; have a little fresh bread and butter!

K—No, I won't! Tell me first, who is my father and where is my mother?

M—[a bit astonished] Why, child? I am your mother, and your papa has gone to bring a new suit for you.

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act II

K—It's all false! Why have you given me the wrong understanding of things till now? I won't be cheated any more! Show me my parents, otherwise you will see me dead.

[*takes a knife lying nearby and threatens suicide*]

M—[*holding his hand*] You urchin! Leave it!

K—No, tell me first!

M—Well, sit down; I'll tell you.

[*K sits on a chair, listening with great interest.*

*The history in brief, is repeated on the screen in silent picturesqueness, showing A=Adityanath working as an architect as in scene I; his simple life and broad humanitarian views as in scenes II and III; and his passing away as in scene V, with his last address to his child (Act I)]*

K—[*rejoicing (to himself) in amazement*] So it is true! Right they are, then! I must stand on my own legs. Why should Jyotinath maintain us when he is not my papa. I won't live under obligation to him any more! But, what about mamma! [*The thought pains him*]

Ah! She loves me so much! How can I leave her? I must! I can't help it. She is wise.

[*reads an advertisement in a newspaper "Wanted, a smart clerk for general office work, in Strange*

Act II] POOR MAN'S BREAD

*Land. Good prospects. P.B. 56"; takes letter paper, writes an application and drops it in the Post. He stops going to school.]*

SCENE VI

OFFICE ROOM:—

*[J=Jyoti comes from outside, unties his clothes, reads a letter and goes to M's=the old Ma'm's room where she is found sweeping]*

J—What's wrong with the child, mother? Why hasn't he attended school for the last three days?

*[K=Kusum enters]*

Oh! Here he is. *[embraces, caresses his head with one of his hands moving lightly backwards]*  
Why do you seem so weary, child?

K—It's owing to the unbearable heat, papa!

J—Where have you come from?

K—I was in the adjoining library, reading a beautiful story on the principles of life, written some ten years back by an architect Adityanath.

J—*[astonished]* What was it, child?

K—*[showing the copy]* Here it is, papa! I'll read it for you.

*[The principles are shown in varying artistic*

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act II

*glittering shades and lights]*

1. A particle of corn sown gives out in hundreds; while hundreds of particles stored unused rot to dust.
2. He who giveth has the right to ask for.
3. Be prepared to face the worst and victory is yours.
4. Thou art the direct representative of God, the God incarnate, on a mission to help the depressed.
5. The moment thou failest in thy duty, thou shalt be suspended.
6. Don't waste thy time after storing worldly things and thus burdening thy luggage. They have been properly stored, and come to thee for being used. Every traveller on a mission finds suitable articles for himself from within. Such is the wonderful construction of the brain. Don't misuse it.
7. Thy actions will speak for thee, and not thy wealth [*as it is never meant to accompany thee*].
8. Whatever is sown must bear fruit; nothing is lost in the dust. Don't long for it.
9. Don't be so mean-minded as to desire good fruits of thy actions for thyself alone;

## Act II] POOR MAN'S BREAD

let something be left for other generations, too.

*[J's eyes are filled with tears]*

**K**—What's wrong with you, papa?

**J**—*[with a deep sigh, wiping his eyelashes]*  
Nothing, child! He was my dearest friend and your dear papa.

**K**—*[with fixed astonished eyes]* My dear papa?  
Ah! Worthy, worthy of him!

*[kisses the paper again and again in rejoicing]*

**J**—Often times I reminded him to save something for the worst days, but he never listened to it.

**K**—Right he was, else that, too, would have been destroyed by the fire.

**J**—Well, child, why don't you attend school?

**K**—*[with a little smile]* You have already answered that question, papa, a minute back! You are not really my papa, are you? Why should I burden you with my livelihood then? The school is bankrupt. It doesn't pay me a farthing, although I stand always first in my studies. Whatever I have learned is quite sufficient to help me and earn my mother's maintainance. I must stand on my own legs now. You have obliged us enough. May God bless you!

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act II

*[J listens to it quietly all the while, admiring the child's viewpoint.]*

**J**—But, you are a child still. Complete your studies, and when you are strong enough to face the worries of the world, you can do as you please.

**K**—Thank you for your kindness, papa! Excuse me! Learning goes on throughout life. Every bit of experience is a matter of study; and a man of wide experience knows the world better than a mere book worm, you told me the other day. I can read, write and understand things; am strong and healthy too. What more should I require to face the worries of the world, papa?

**J**—Still you are too young for any work, child!

**K**—Excuse me, papa! I have decided to serve; have applied for it, and here is the reply.

*[reads the letter]*

**J**—[quite astonished] Ah, child! Leaving for Strange Land? Have you thought of your poor mamma, and the worries of travelling?

**K**—[calmly] The world itself is strange, papa! I have thought over all this and our moral debts to you, too. I'll take mamma, too, with me if you so desire.

**J**—[glad at the child's frankness of heart, with a kiss] Be brave, gallant and benevolent as thy

## Act II] POOR MAN'S BREAD

father! God is merciful; he helps those who help themselves.

K—No, papa! Here your views differ from those of my father. What I could gather is this:—

As the trees exist,

As the trees exist, with the wide spread plumes  
Of leaves and branches,

Bearing the burning heat of the sun,

And the horrors of hurricanes, saying,

“Hither is the resting place for you all,

Oh, ye, birds and beasts of the land!

Insects or human forms whatever you be!!

Appease your hunger with sweet ripe fruits!

Quiet your mind with enchanting fragrance  
of flowers!

At home be friends!

Every particle of our existence is at your  
disposal,

Without expecting anything in return.”

So is the living of good men!

So is the living of good men, exclusively,

For the welfare of others,

Apart from the question of their own.

The sun and the moon, the earth and the  
ocean, too,

Are seen serving unceasingly, selflessly:

And that, too, for the good of others.

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act II

Let me, too, live for the service of others,  
And not for my own selfish gains.  
A mother cares more for her lame child,  
A mother cares more for her lame child, so  
does God,  
For those who are selfless.

*[J stands amazed. K leaves to prepare himself for the journey]*

### SCENE VII

*GLAD NEWS:—*

*[M=The old Ma'm is preparing food. J=Jyoti enters]*

J—*[entering]* Mother! Kusum prepares for Strange Land on service.

M—*[astonished]* Why?

J—Don't discourage him, mother! He is just like his father. His views are quite admirable. Though young, he is brave enough to face the worldly worries and find his way out, I am sure.

*[J leaves; M is again busy with her work. K=Kusum enters]*

K—*[entering]* Glad news, mamma! I am leaving for Strange Land on service. Two pounds pay per month, one in advance, free passage.

Act II] POOR MAN'S BREAD

**M**—Why child?

**K**—To lighten papa's burden, and earn bread for you, myself and others. I can't bear papa's obligation any more. [*giving her one pound coin*]

Here is one pound for you. You can live in our own cottage and be contented. I'll be sending you more every month, and will return with the shield, or on it.

**M**—[*embracing*] God be with you!

[*J enters and all dine together*]

SCENE VIII

*ON DOCK:—*

[*K=Kusum accompanied by J=Jyoti and M=the old Ma'm is just in time on Dock. K shows his passport, embraces J and M and gets on the ship. It whistles and leaves the Dock. J and M with their eyes filled with tears wave hands in farewell. K in return waves his kerchief*]

PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act. III

ACT THIRD

SCENE I

*IN STRANGE LAND:—*

*[V & Co. bankers' big office with a beautiful garden behind. Different departments are seen one after the other. K=Kusum is seen just finishing writing some letters to put into the post in the chamber of V=Vinodchandra]*

V—I hope you feel at home here, Mr. Kusumchandra!

K—*[with a sigh]* I have to feel so, sir, else my mother shall starve!

V—Keep yourself comfortably. You can draw three pounds per month for the present. The cashier goes on leave, and you are to attend to his work till his return.

K—Thank you, sir.

*[V leaves and K writes the glad news to his mother]*

SCENE II

*AFTER MIDNIGHT:—*

*[From an open window a thief enters the chamber of J's=Jyoti's premises, opens the safe,*

## Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

*and takes away ornaments and cash—everything to a farthing. I awakes but the thief escapes. He climbs down the neighbour's wall, and rides on a horse into the far off wilderness]*

J—Thief! Thief!

*[Neighbours come out with lanterns and sticks and try to find him; but in vain. The police come and inquire. They follow the foot-marks. The thief is seen riding at full speed through the wilderness, until he reaches a pond, where he takes a pleasure-boat and sailing a little further, anchors it on one side and swims to the other side, changing boots every few steps. The police are seen in his pursuit, following the foot-marks of the neighbour's lost horse]*

## SCENE III

### WHEN MISERIES COME:—

J—[in a pitiable pondering mood, his legs crossed at ankles and his hands folded, with elbows resting on knees, with a deep sigh] What to do? Whom to ask? Where to go? Oh, God! Thou art my only shelter. Five thousand pounds loss! One thousand pounds debt! [The shadow of A—Aditya he sees again and his words of advice flash

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act III

*through his mind. They are seen on screen, and he exclaims]*

1. Hundreds of particles stored unused rot to dust.
2. He who giveth has the right to ask for.
3. The moment thou failest in thy duty, thou shalt be suspended.
4. Thy actions will speak for thee and not thy wealth (as it is never meant to accompany thee).

Right you are my friend! Right to a word! I realize it now.

Don't, don't look at me so contemptuously, though I am really a culprit! Pity me, oh friend! See how miserable I am! I do repent it now, but it's too late. Don't laugh at me!

*[the race course, the dance hall and hotel, pass through his mind one after the other. The scenes may be repeated on the screen. He closes his eyes to shut out the sight, in great disgust at himself]*

No, I don't deserve any mercy. I never knew you were so great. Let me die the most unworthy miserable beastly death, by starving. Let the world know the result of my foolish conceptions; let them realize the real worth of thy principles of life.

## Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

*[as if hearing some voice]*

What? Still there is a way for me in life! A sunshine in the midst of the blackest night! How can it be, my friend? But I must believe in thee. How kind of thee to show mercy towards such a base, ungrateful one as I! *[Two creditors and his friend L=Lalan enter]*

**Creditors**—Good morning, sir!

**J**—*[With a sigh, clearing his nose and resting on his right arm with the right folded leg on the ground, his left knee braced in the left elbow bracket, leaving the hand loose]* Good morning.

**Creditor 1**—What about my money, sir?

**Creditor 2**—And what about mine, sir?

*[J heaves a deep sigh]*

**L**—Well, gentlemen! You can see that our friend has lost everything but this house; and he is prepared to do as you all please.

**Creditor 1**—Let the house be sold by auction; it won't fetch even a hundred pounds.

**Creditor 2**—Let him sell his child too; we don't care. We must have our dues.

*[J sighs. His ten year old child comes]*

**Child**—Papa, papa! I am hungry. Why don't you speak? Give me something to eat.

**J**—*[with eyes full of tears, taking him in his*

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act III]

*lap*] Yes, you shall have it.

**Child**—Or, give me a penny, I'll buy something.

[*after some whispers*]

**L**—Well, sirs! He is prepared to part with his house, if all the creditors are fully satisfied with a proportionate share.

**Creditor 1**—Why? Let him go to jail!

**L**—Otherwis he shall have to seek the court's protection!

**Creditor 2**—Let him do as he likes. We must have our dues in full.

[*A third creditor comes with an attachment war-  
rant. J has to quit the house and it is sealed  
by the court's order*]

## SCENE IV

### IN PURSUIT:—

[*The police pursuing the thief, reach a pond.  
Instead of foot-marks of horse, some boot-  
marks are seen leading to the pond. They cross  
the pond, but finding no more marks, return  
with a peculiar type of pleasure-boat found  
there, lying unowned*]

Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

SCENE V

*ETIQUETTE:—*

*[In the Insolvency Court J—Jyoti submits his debts and assets schedule with an application form to a clerk. L—Lalan is with him]*

**J**—Will you please accept this?

**Clerk**—*[looking at it]* You must write this on a proper form, sir! This won't do.

**L**—You can make the necessary changes and he will initial there.

**Clerk**—We have got to attend many other things here, sir! You had better consult some pleader.

**J**—But he'll charge for it, sir!

**Clerk**—I can't help it. You must pay for the work done.

*[J and L go to the head clerk, where they have to wait for some time, as the clerk does not even care to look at them, and continues initialing vouchers. At last J begins]*

**J**—Well, sir!

**Head Clerk**—Wait, please!

*[After initialing a few vouchers more]*

Yes, what do you want?

**L**—Here is a petition for insolvency, sir!

**Head Clerk**—*[pointing to the former one]*

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act III

You can see that clerk there.

**L**—We have been to him sir, he does not approve of this form.

**Head Clerk**—It's not my business. Ask him whatever you want to ask, please!

**L** and **J**—[*in despair going back to the same clerk*] Well, sir!

**Clerk**—It's tiffin time now. After an hour, please!

[*The clerk goes for tiffin; the poor fellows have to wait outside. A peon who has been watching them all the while, approaches them*]

**Peon**—Gentlemen! Throw some pieces of bread, and the dogs will stop barking. These people are accustomed to such things. A shilling or two will save all your troubles.

**L**—Thank you. [turning to **J**] Have you got something in your pocket **Jyoti**?

**J**—What can I have? Even my empty pocket has been worried by the rats.

**L**—Alright, I'll manage it some how; but you know well, "I am also too short of money," and you should expect nothing more than this from me.

[*J listens to it quietly. It pains his heart*]

**Child**—Papa, I am very hungry. Give me something to eat. [seeing a man selling chocolates]

### Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

Buy me some chocolates papa! [cries]

[*The clerk returns*]

**Clerk**—[*seeing the child crying*] Tch! Take the child out, please!

[*J goes out with the child. The hawker seeing the child crying, gives him two pieces of chocolate, and he stops crying*]

**L**—[*offering two shillings*] Well sir, this is a thankless task, no doubt. Still, accept this. I pay you from my own pocket.

**Clerk**—[*accepting the two shillings and quietly putting them into his drawer*] That's alright! I'll do what is necessary. Excuse me, friend! We have to be a bit harsh as we are paid so poorly. You can go now. I'll write to you when needed.

**J** and **L**—Thank you, sir! [*They go out of the office*]

**L**—Good-bye Jyoti! Now I must go home.

[*They shake hands and part*]

**J**—[*in despair*] Oh God! Thou art the only Merciful One! Whose shelter have I now but Thee? Be pleased to favour me with Thy most tender glance once more, though I have no right to ask for it.

PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act III

SCENE VI

*THE OLD MA'M*

[*M—The old Ma'm is seen once more in her own cottage, grinding and spinning, living her simple life as usual, giving alms to the poor, and praying God to take care of her only child*]

**M**—Oh Merciful One! Don't forget that I have left the child entirely to Thy mercy.

[*A postman delivers a letter. She opens and finds in it a one-pound note. She kisses and holds it to her heart in deep love, with eyes closed, as if praying God to guide the child*.]

SCENE VII

*PURE HEARTS:—*

[*K—Kusum is seen as a cashier, counting notes and adjusting accounts. One pound is missing.*

*S—Saroj is seen standing on the front staircase*]

**K**—[in a pondering mood] Where can it be?

**S**—[staring at *K* from the staircase window]

Why does papa worry? I'd rather like to embrace one with such a gallant look! How beautiful, too!

[*V—Vinod hears and marks the words of S—Saroj, while ascending the staircase, and walks*

## Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

*away quietly with a pleased look]*

**K**—[*seeing S staring at him*] Oh! Here is the thief! What are you staring at? You shouldn't cut jokes like this here. Where is the money? I'll speak to papa, mind!

**S**—[*coming a little forward*] Why, why Kusum, why are you so rough today? What's wrong with you?

**K**—[*a bit annoyed*] You silly girl, you still dare to ask me, what's wrong with me, and why I am so rough! Mind well, I'll tell this to papa. I just went out and returned, and find one pound missing. It's never fair to play with money like this. I am sure there was nobody here when I left, and while you are watching here, where else can it go?

**S**—No, Kusum! You are mistaken. I am not a booby to play like that. Please adjust your accounts properly; or, I'll do it for you.

*[goes a bit nearer]*

**K**—[*in wrath*] You tiny girl! You will adjust my accounts! And then, there'll be no need for a cashier.

**S**—Why talk unnecessary things, Kusum? I have just come up to help you, if possible, seeing you puzzled. Don't think in the least that I am making fun of you.

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act III

**K**—[smiling away] To help me? Saroj! God has created none to help me in this world. He knows better how to help me, Himself. Don't say so for God's sake.

**S**—Well, but what harm is there, Kusum, to let me have a glance at the accounts?

**K**—Harm? Of course, in every way. If one sees you adjusting my accounts, what impression will he carry?

**S**—Why are you so afraid? It's but human weakness. Let it rest on your lap if you wish and I shall have a glance at it.

[*V=Vinod descends the staircase to see why S=Saroj is waiting so long*]

**K**—You naughty girl! You won't listen! [*placing the book before her in disgust*] Here it is. Please pay off the amount now!

**S**—[*seeing the accounts*] Where is the one pound marked here, please, which you paid to papa a few minutes ago in haste?

**K**—Tch! Oh, I see! Right you are. Thank you, Saroj, excuse me for talking to you so roughly!

[*V enjoys the innocent conversation*]

**S**—Now it is my turn. I must disclose all this to papa. Don't you remember how angry you were that time? Any other girl in my place would have

### Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

shrieked aloud with fear at your furious temper. But I love you sincerely Kusum, and that alone helped me stand by your fiery temper.. I beg your love in return! Mere love and nothing else.

**K**—Shut up, child! [*with a piercing look*] None, none but my old mother has loved me sincerely till now, and she gets it in return. You love me! How foolish! Did you consult your father? You, a girl of a multimillionaire in love with the biggest spend-thrift—a mere clerk drawing three pounds per month and spending two out of it for others, contented with one only for his own living! What happiness can you expect from me? When the guests are more, you and I shall have to starve. Are you prepared for that? Think before you leap.

**S**—Love is blind, Kusum! It doesn't require wordly luxuries. It doesn't care for worldly happiness or miseries, caste or creed. Nothing in the world can bar its pure path. It requires only love in return. It cares little for worldly talk. Papa is very wise. He will never come in my way I am sure. Won't you oblige me? Be sure, Kusum, I shall never come in your way, but shall be helping you in all your undertakings throughout life. Don't refuse it! Don't disappoint me!

[*V's eyes are filled with tears*]

**K**—Saroj, dear! I can't but accept your very

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act III

earnest request, if only your father willingly agrees to it. Don't press him in the least, Saroj! Observe it on oath, I say. It won't be good for any of us otherwise.

[*V walks away*]

Go, papa might be waiting for you.

[*S glad at heart parts with a lovely kiss*]

## SCENE VIII

### *PRIZE:—*

[*Proclamation of prize for preparing a boat by order of Police Supt.*]

“Know ye, people of all castes and creeds, that, whoever prepares a boat similar to the sample lying at the police station shall receive a prize of ten pounds.”

## SCENE IX

### *UNEASY MIND:—*

[*V = Vinodchandra in his chambers in a pondering mood, resting on his buttocks and moodily rocking back and forth, with his right unclenched fist in left hand, and his knees fixed in elbow bracket, keeping the legs from*

## Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

*touching the ground, flapping and rubbing the feet softly against each other at times.]*

V—what a beautiful match! How innocent! Let people say whatever they like! I'll get them married. Honest, gallant, brave, beautiful and healthy appearance; obliging nature and a promising youth! What more is required? Money? Ah! It's a trifling thing. I've got millions. Of what use are they to me? He shall use them in better ways. Still, let me be sure! [gets up and in the guise of a traveller he starts with stick in hand to the residence of K].

## SCENE X

### K'S COTTAGE:—

[*Crowd of beggars at the cottage of K—Kusum shouting blessings; "God bless you etc." V—Vinod arriving at the place in guise of a traveller stands amazed at the scene. He takes his seat in front of K's—Kusum's cottage amidst the beggars, fatigued as it were. K—Kusum comes with a basket full of grams and ground nuts and gives them in handfuls. V—Vinod-chandra lies down with eyes half-closed. All retreat but V. K—Kusum goes near him and awakens him]*]

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act III

**K**—[awakening *V*] Worthy guest! Take your share of the alms please!

[*V* opens his eyes and tries to sit up]

Oh, you seem to be much fatigued!

**V**—[looking at *K*] Yes friend, as the result of three days continuous travel!

**K**—Be at home, please! We shall dine together.

[takes him by hand to his cottage]

**V**—Thank you, sir, God bless you!

[*K*=Kusum gives him water. *V*=Vinod washes his hands and feet and joins him at table, enjoying very simple food] What are you, friend?

**K**—I? An humble servant, a cashier in Messrs *V* & Co.

**V**—Oh, it's a well-known firm! Does it pay you nicely?

**K**—Yes, sir! The master is very kind to me. I don't know why! It is but God's desire. I came on a salary of two pounds only, but he pays me three pounds per month now.

**V**—Oh, they ought to pay you much more. A very respectable firm indeed! Doing business in lots. How can you get on with such a trifling salary?

**K**—It's enough for the present. God is great!

### Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

He'll send some more help in the near future, I am sure, because the poor need it. I always feel they ought to be fed with some better food. I spend one pound for my own living, send one to my mother, and the rest I leave for the poor.

**V**—Why don't you ask for more? Mr. Vinod is very generous. He won't be displeased, I am sure.

**K**—It's not my business, sir! I get my bread regularly; and it is but for God to care for his dying creatures. I am only his agent. He ought to send me help. He knows it better.

**V**—What's your daily programme, sir?

**K**—After the morning prayer and exercise, giving alms to the poor, taking food and attending Office; returning at 8 p.m. after a walk, taking the remaining dish of the morning food if spared, and after petty household work and prayers, going to bed.

**V**—Quite admirable! I'd like a youth like you to marry my only daughter and enjoy my wealth, which is in abundance.

**K**—Thank you, sir! Excuse me! I've promised my hand to the only daughter of my master if her father agrees to it at all; and I don't wish to bother myself with others' affairs!

**V**—Well, you can think it over. We shall dis-

PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act III

cuss it when we meet next. Good-bye! [walks away]

K—Good-bye. [prepares to go to office]

SCENE X

WHILE RAINING:—

[J=Jyoti and his child are in search of shelter during a thunder-storm. The child cries bitterly. They are seen passing through the wilderness]

J—Yes, darling! Now we are near mother's cottage. You'll get every thing there. [takes him on shoulder. Both arrive with wet clothes at M's cottage. J taps at the door]

M—[peeping out] Oh, child! How could you manage to walk in this terrible storm? Hurry up, change your clothes! Warm yourselves!

[J changes clothes and sitting by the hearth, relates his story with a sigh. The scenes of his safe broken open and his house sealed under police control are exhibited as in scenes II & III Act III]

Why worry now? Be at home here.

[The child feels uneasy. M gives him a piece of bread and he takes it in rejoicing]

J—What about Kusum, mother?

## Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

**M**—[shows his letter gladly, giving him letter-paper and pen.] Here is his letter. Will you write to him a reply? [J writes]

## SCENE XI

*V DECIDES:—*

**V**—[sitting in his private chambers in a pensive mood in the same pose as in scene IX but with his feet resting on the ground and his hands clasped, showing the palms] Why should he not enjoy my wealth? It's been increasing like anything from the time he came. My heart is drawn towards him as it were. My daughter, too, loves him sincerely. My conscience says he alone is a match for her. Then, why delay? [K enters] Oh, Kusum! I want you to take charge of the granary and attend the affairs of our shrine from today, and you can give alms to the poor every morning, as if it were your own.

[K seems astonished]

Don't be so astonished, Kusum! It is my desire. There is a great famine this year. Poor people are starving and struggling for life. I've plenty of wealth. What's the use of it, then?

**K**—Quite admirable! Why not create, then, some

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act III

work for them at the same time, sir, to avoid idleness among them?

V—That you can do afterwards. It's no good asking starving people to work for us. Feed them properly and it will create a field for their work.

[*A postman delivers a letter to K*]

What is it, Kusum?

K—A very interesting letter from my old mother, sir! [*shows him the letter; its contents being,*] “Dear Kusum! lovely child! I am very happy to hear of your prosperity. Of twenty shillings which you send me every month, twelve are spent in giving alms to the poor and eight for my living. Dear papa has lost almost everything in theft, and has been obliged to file insolvency. He came with his child yesterday to stay with me. Hoping you are alright there,

Blessings of M,

Your most affectionate mother”.

V—[*quite astonished*] Well, Kusum! You never told me all this. How can she maintain herself and the two guests on eight shillings? Impossible! Not even a bellyful of mere dry bread she gets. Kusum, you are too benevolent! You can draw your salary at five pounds per month and send her two pounds; and I think three would suffice for your expenses here.

## Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

K—[*thanking God with half-closed eyes*] Thank you, sir!

V—Let us go to the shrine now. [they start]

## SCENE XII

### THE SHRINE:—

[*K=Kusum and V=Vinod come to a shrine of the most beautiful architecture owned by V, and specially built in memory of A=Adityanath the saviour of his and his only child's lives, whom he believes was a saint and whose principles he admires and follows. Inside the shrine is seen the saintly bronze statue of Adityanath asking God to be merciful towards the poor and the depressed. A few pictures relating to his life are seen on the walls, especially the one in which he is seen working with his fellow brethren as in scene I; the 2nd, as cobbling his shoes, K=Kusum sitting by his side and M=the old Ma'm giving alms to the beggars; the 3rd, saving life of S=Saroj from the pond, and 4th, giving her treatment at his house and V=Vinod visiting his poor cottage as a traveller, thanking him.*

*V and K enter the shrine. People are seen coming to the shrine to pay homage to the*

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act III

saintly statue with some incense and candle sticks, and going away. The shrine is neat and clean, with incense and lighted candles giving out a pleasing odour and sanctifying the place. They go near the statue, bow their heads with clasped hands in prayer and enter into the details of the shrine. A short history of the saint and his principles of life are carved on the foot stone of the statue. K reads and is much astonished to see his father's image in such a far land. He goes quite near the image, puts his head on its feet washing them with tears of joy. V=Vinod is quite surprised at the scene as he never believed K would take so much interest in the shrine. K comes down wiping his eyelashes and together they look at the wall pictures. V explains to him the pictures and K seems to take much interest in the matter. After examining all the pictures K=Kusum begins]

K—The history doesn't seem quite complete, sir! One more picture will complete the whole thing. [He takes out his pocket diary and gives newspaper clippings to V. The one depicts A's cottage on fire, and A from his death bed giving his last sermons addressed to his five-year-old child K, who is seen standing by him, his old mother is sitting beside

### Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

*him on the cot and a few friends fanning him, in picture form as in scene V; and the next being the copy of his sermon.]*

**V**—[rather astonished and pleased to see the things, gives them back to *K*, saying] Do preserve them carefully.

### SCENE XIII

*WHEN S PRAYS GOD:—*

**S**—Oh Lord! Thou art the best judge of hearts!!  
Oh Lord! Thou art the best judge of hearts!!  
Thou art the best judge of hearts!  
Thou art the best judge of hearts!!  
Oh Lord! Thou art the best judge of hearts!!  
Flowers and flies, lover's \*blue eyes! [repeat]  
Bowers and creepers, and rivers and oceans,  
The sun and the moon are Thy arts.  
Oh Lord! Thou art the best judge of hearts!!

**V**—[entering] Saroj, darling! I wish that Kusum should be thy husband. Will you like it?

**S**—[blushes with shame, her eyes fixed on the ground below] As papa desires.

**V**—He is of a very obliging nature, strong, healthy and beautiful, too. Will you come to see how he manages the Granary?

**S**—I'll see it, papa!

blue-black.

## SCENE XIV

*THE GRANARY:—*

[*The Granary of V=Vinodchandra is situated just opposite his shrine, near the cottage of K=Kusum. Beggars receive corn and give blessings to K*]

**S**—[entering] Let me give some! It will make me very happy. [*tries to take the basket from K's hands*]

**K**—No, it's not your work, Saroj!

**S**—Will you hear some happy news, Kusum!

**K**—No, not now; this is the happiest. Let me finish this. If you wish to do something you can pay them a penny each. Here is the purse. [*Glad at heart she takes the purse and follows K paying a penny to each of them. When all leave, the old guest appears once more with a stick in hand*]

**Guest**—[to himself] What a nice couple! [*coming near K*] Good-morning, sir! Congratulations!

**K**—[stands amazed; looking at him from top to toe] Good-morning. Congratulations? For what?

**Guest**—For this—your ever longed for happy day, and obtaining such a beautiful bride!

**K**—This is my master's daughter, sir, and their grain store!

### Act III] POOR MAN'S BREAD

**Guest**—But she loved you sincerely, as you said that day! Hasn't she married you, yet? How cruel of her!

**S**—[*provoked*] Be quiet, sir! It's not your business to interfere in our affairs. [turning to K] Who is this old booby? He doesn't seem to understand manners even!

**K**—Don't be angry, Saroj! He is our guest and a gentleman, too. Self makes him speak, so roughly. He is also a rich man and desires to get his only daughter married to me.

**S**—[*with burning eyes in wrath*] Then!

**K**—I've told him "My hand is promised to Saroj, my dear sweet-cuckoo, if her father consents to it".

**S**—[*blushes with shame*] Enough, Kusum! Papa has already consented to our marriage and he is very anxious for it. Give this booby your final reply, and let him go.

**K**—No, Saroj! He is our guest. It's meal time. I can't let him go so. [turning to the guest] Well, gentleman, will you oblige us by joining our table?

**Guest**—Thank you, sir, not unless I get a definite reply to my standing proposal.

**K**—Well, I am sorry. Her father has already agreed to our marriage as she says; and I've no reason to disbelieve it.

**Guest**—Am I to give up hope, then?

PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act III

**K**—I can't help it.

**Guest**—Will you give me some water, please?

[*K gives it. He washes his mouth and cleans his face, disclosing himself in his real form*]

[*Meanwhile*]

**K**—Did you ask your father, Saroj, for our marriage?

**S**—No, dear! I was thinking of it; but how kind of God! He himself asked me whether I'd like to marry you. The reply was not necessary, and he agreed to our marriage.

[*K rejoicing gives her a mild kiss*]

**Guest**—[*after cleaning face*] A little more, please!

[*K = Kusum and S = Saroj seeing V = Vinod, stand amazed; K with a little smile on face, and S frightened, awaiting the consequence*]

**V**—[*with parental affection, and pleased smile*] Saroj, darling! Why're you so frightened? There was nothing wrong! I am rather pleased.

**S**—[*goes running and falling on her knees*] I beg your pardon, papa! I spoke so roughly a few minutes ago, and still, how kind you are!

**Guest**—[*takes her by hand*] It was alright. [*his affectionate hand moves over her curly hair*]

## Act. IV] POOR MAN'S BREAD

[*turning towards K*] Kusum, darling! I leave Saroj at your mercy from today and request you to treat her as your life-long companion in happiness and misery. [*gives S's hand in his*] I retire from these worldly affairs, and you are to manage the whole as you desire.

[*K=Kusum listens to it quietly, praying God. V=Vinod gives them blessings*] Long live and prosper!

## ACT FOURTH

### SCENE I

#### AUCTION SALE:—

[*House of J=Jyoti is on auction sale. Bids are one hundred and fifty pounds only. M=the old Ma'm guides the postman to J's house, where he delivers a registered letter insured for five hundred pounds. J reads it*]

Dear papa, reading in today's news the sale of your house by auction, I can't but pity you. 'Care for the inferiors and the Superior shall care for you. Care for self only and you are left alone.' Find herewith enclosed a draft for five hundred pounds from which you can pay off your creditors

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act. IV,

and take possession of the house. I hope this is in time. Tell mamma "I am very happy here and have recently married my master's only daughter, a very lovely one. My master has retired from worldly affairs, and I have to manage everything here. I could have called you here, but there was a great rebellion here a few days ago, and a national war is expected very soon." For more see next mail.

Most affectionately yours,  
Kusum

*[Glad at heart at this unexpected help, J=Jyoti jumps forward rejoicing and bids at twenty-five pounds more for K=Kusum and takes it. People are awaiting the consequence. He produces the draft and all stand amazed. M prays God and begs for the welfare of her only born]*

J—[repeats] 'Care for your inferiors and the Superior shall care for you.' True, true to a word. I'll follow it strictly. I'll pay off half the debts now and the remainder by instalments.

SCENE II

*AN IDEAL ART COLLEGE:—*

*[K=Kusum devises a scheme for the poor and the depressed. He starts poor men's free art college. The office is taken to the grain stores premises. The big, beautiful office and dwelling premises of V=Vindchandra is converted into the college premises, well equipped with all necessary equipments for an art college; the garden attached to it, into a botanical garden; the beautiful shrine makes added extensions for a lecture hall, hostels for students, travellers' home, a public hospital and a maternity home, where prayers are regularly held by residents without distinction. Poor people are seen working voluntarily in all these places with great interest, learning the arts of various tastes with delight, managing all things themselves in disciplined well-organized ways. Gardening, farming, dairy and canning industries; bamboo, cane, fiber and leather works; carpentry, pottery, porcelain, cloisonne, damascene and glass industries; spinning and weaving; artistic work of every sort; chemistry and mechanism of every description are taught in this college. The articles produced*

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act IV.

*by the students are exhibited in a museum hall, which, on sale, fetch a good income. A number of experts find their way to independent living every year, by the efforts of this college; and the institution, too, becomes self-supporting, a blessing to the nation. All possible scenes are exhibited on the screen]*

[*The Home Minister visits the Institute. He is taken to all the departments by K=Kusum and then received in a drawing room. Coffee and cakes etc. are served.*]

**Home Minister:** —Mr. Kusumchandra, your progressive Institute has affected the Government income a great deal, and I have been asked to request you on behalf of my Government to pay an annual assessment at ten thousand pounds or submit the management to the Government.

**K**—I am quite surprised to learn this from you, sir. This Institute is not at all meant to make money. The whole property of Mr. Vinodchandra has been invested in it, as you know, for the nation's interest. His office and dwelling premises are converted into these college premises, his garden into this botanical garden and the shrine is added as an extension for a lecture hall, hostels for students, travellers' home, a public hospital and a maternity home. It is not profit-making. It has produced in-

## Act IV] POOR MAN'S BREAD

numerable artists of various descriptions scattered all over the world; and our wise Government ought to be proud of it.

**Home Minister:**—That is alright, Mr. Kusum-chandra, but the Government, itself, is not much materially profited thereby, and she has to find some way to survive. You seem to have no idea of the immense expenditure of the standing military force and other various establishments which drain the purse of our Government, for the preservation of peace and order.

**K**—But where is the necessity for all this. The whole nation would be at her command if proper training and education were imparted throughout selflessly, as this Institute does, I am sure. We have no paid servants, paid clerks or officers in our Institute, although it seems so unwieldy; and the work is carried on so efficiently, intelligently, economically and honestly, that one would certainly like to envy it. The staff has not to think of the maintenance problem at all, and the members work voluntarily, bound by a sense of duty.

**Home Minister:**—Ah, it's marvellous, no doubt. But, the Government has to solve so many political problems which you are not expected even to imagine, my friend! And so she would like to handle it in still better ways, if you please.

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act IV

**K**—If that's really the idea, I am quite willing to help the Government by putting the management of this Institute under her complete trust for some time as a trial.

**Home Minister:**—And she would feel much obliged to you for the same.

### SCENE III

#### *THE CHARM OF LIFE:*—

*[K—Kusum inspects the work going on in the shrine-extensions, one after the other, and comes to the Maternity Home Department, where S—Saroj is seen nursing a patient with great care]*

**K**—[going near the bed] How is she now?

**S**—Oh, dear! I have had to watch her since morning. She is just feeling a bit relieved now; but I can't leave her alone even for a moment.

*[The patient acts a bit delirious]*

**K**—Now we shall have a bit of relief, as our kind Government has undertaken to look after the Institute.

**S**—[somewhat astonished] The Government? To take care of our Institute? *[The idea doesn't appeal to her]*

## Act IV] POOR MAN'S BREAD

**K**—Yes dear, there are reasons for that. The Home Minister visited the Institute today and after a discussion I've agreed to keep the Institute under her entire trust for some time to let her have a trial, as, so far, there are no reasons to doubt her honesty.

**S**—But I don't think she will do it so disinterestedly.

**K**—Surely not. We can't expect that from her. But if she really takes deep interest in the sentiment of its life and organization, conducts it economically, improves it a bit more, and earns a little out of it, we shouldn't grudge it.

**S**—And if she doesn't keep her promise?

**K**—The world shall have a concrete example of the so-called civilization, and a good lesson to learn from it. Nothing will be lost thereby, my dearie! Be assured. [*S is treating the patient; K fondles her lovingly; while they both sing a song.*]

**K**—It is the world that has to care for flowers,

**S**—Which bloom and fill the atmosphere with their sweet perfume!

**K**—Beautifying the place around them and fade,  
Giving the lesson of Life to the human world;

**S**—The sandal smells sweeter, [*repeat*]  
When receives the ruthless cuts of knife!

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act IV

**K**—And makes the world mad after it,  
When burns on blazing fire;

**S**—Disappears, though, with its fragrance!

**K**—It leaves a beautiful lesson on Charm of  
Life behind.

**S**—Surey, surely dear! I can understand it  
now.

*[The patient is quiet. S and K take their seat  
on a small sofa nearby]*

**S**—The world shall know how to leap in the  
deepmost dark!

**K**—In search of the dazzling light, seemingly  
hot,

**S**—As that of the fire, clearing the rubbish of  
the land,

By its burning sparks spread all over!

**K**—Still, calm and quiet, unshaken as Mount  
Fuji,

**S**—Clad in the thick winter snow-garb!

**K**—Sanctifying the place by its pleasant, per-  
fuming charm,

**S**—An outcome of the steam issued unharmed!

**K**—Radiating the atoms of Life, unfailingly,  
unawares,

For which it never cares,

An eternal light it is, that fails never!

## Act IV] POOR MAN'S BREAD

**S**—And the names of my dear Kusum, and her  
lovely Saroj,

Will be dancing on its lips for ever!!

[*S=Saroj affectionately moving in the arms  
of gallant K=Kusum, her charming eyes  
enchanting him all the while, her head on his  
shoulder. The scene ends in a sweet, warm,  
lovely kiss.]*

## SCENE IV

After few years

### *IMPERIAL MANAGEMENT:—*

*[The Institute is managed under Government  
trust. Instead of a free one, it has been changed  
to a paying one. Government clerks and officers  
enjoy high salaries at the cost of the labour of  
the artisans. Unusual taxation and repressions  
have stepped in. After a few local rebellions  
all the artisans of the nation have gone on strike.  
It has given birth to “Artisans Independence  
League.” K=Kusum addresses an open meet-  
ing of the League. Before his address, sounds  
are heard: “Why? Who is he to interfere  
in our affairs? Kill or die. No mercy. We  
shall have our own way. No Government can  
bar our path. (etc.)”]*

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act IV

**K**—Brethren: As artisans we have to fight for our rights with artistic peaceful weapons, which would build up the nation in character and bring about the ever longed-for world peace. Let's resolve not to rest until we make our Institute free from the present corruptions quite independent as before. It is the world's free property, a divine one. None can destroy it. None can enslave it. Whoever hurts it shall hurt himself. Let the world say whatever it may, it shall move in its own sphere, on its own axis just like the earth, the sun and the moon; then the charm of disarmament will ensue.

### SCENE V

*WHILE PREGNANT:—*

[*S=Saroj is pregnant. She is anxiously waiting for the return of Kusum, sitting on a sofa, feeling uneasy]*

**S**—Why hasn't he returned yet? I don't feel well at all! [*two maid-servants stand fanning her; shouts of the artisans are heard; some shout in rejoicing, some in fury, some in agony*] What's this for?

[*K enters, the maids leave*]

**K**—[*taking his seat by her side*] Saroj, dear! I

## Act IV] POOR MAN'S BREAD

have to lead the artisans, in today's campaign, and must leave very soon, prepared even for the worst. I'll be returning shortly, but if I do not, don't mourn; rather rejoice, if I die for the nation's cause.

**S**—And I must accompany you.

**K**—No, Saroj, you can't! You are wise. Protect the child and see that you render some service to the nation by its birth. It's too late. We must part. Rejoice! Don't be sad in the least. [kisses]

**S**—Kusum! My heart and soul! I can't but submit to your desires. Forget not dear, that I love my gallant Kusum, who never steps behind in his undertaking!

**K**—Be sure of it, dear! Pray God! Good-bye!  
[*K leaves; S is looking at him with a deep sigh, closes eyes in prayer and a couple of tears are seen rolling down her rosy cheeks*]

## SCENE VI

### THE CAMPAIGN:—

*[All the artisans join K's—Kusum's national flag.*

*K leads them to the place where the Institute is situated, carefully guarded by the Government Police and Officers. All citizens have gathered there to see the result. The artisans*

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act IV,

*force their way in near the gate, peacefully, dauntlessly. The bamboo-stick charge from the Police begins. They receive it voluntarily, as a blessing to the nation. Hundreds of the victims are seen lying senseless. They are seen being removed to Hospitals by the Red-Cross volunteers. K=Kusum particularly is seen receiving the severe blows of the heavy-bamboo-sticks voluntarily, till he goes senseless, which makes the striking scene more attractive. He is fatally wounded. The mass revolution develops. The citizens force their way in with shouts of national slogans. They are seen trying to snatch the sticks from the hands of the Police. The Constables fire empty shots into the air to strike terror amongst them; but in vain. After a short skirmish, they give way, and are seen standing in despair waiting for a fresh order.]*

## SCENE VII

### WHEN LOVERS MEET LAST:—

*[K=Kusum attended by doctors at the Shrine-Hospital is given Imperial medical treatment with the other wounded artisans. The picture of A's=Aditynath's cottage on fire and his*

## Act IV] POOR MAN'S BREAD

*last sermon is now seen on the wall, right behind his cot]*

**K**—Ah! Saroj! this wound is almost fatal. I must prepare myself for the worst. Poor mamma won't be able to see the face of her dying son, too! [S sobs] Saroj, dear, you are wise. Don't cry. What wrong is there? Every one is to die sooner or later. But your Kusum dies for the nation's cause. Rejoice! Gain courage! [S wipes her eyelashes] Nothing is immortal in this world, but the invisible soul. Love it sincerely, and you are happy. Every earthly thing, animate or inanimate, has its destination within the soul, from whence it has come forth, and to which it must return in the end, to mingle with itself chemically, as it were. This is what people call death. The visible shapes are merely changed. The body is the offspring of the soul, produced by itself for its own enjoyment, nourished or destroyed as it needs, just as a spider spreads and contracts its web. Do you follow me?

**S**—[with a deep sigh] Yes, dear! And I'll follow with body and soul.

**K**—Not that way, Saroj! Do you understand, I mean?

**S**—Certainly, dear, to a word! What's the good of this body, too, when its soul, Kusum, has left

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act IV

it? It should be destroyed.

**K**—Do you love my body, Saroj, or soul?

**S**—I? I love my Kusum in body and soul, immersed in his. They are his and not mine. They shall live with him, here or elsewhere.

**K**—Then Saroj, dearie! Let my soul reside in thy body, with thy own; and protect the would-be born. I wish it. I order thee. I'll leave this body.

[*S with tears in her eyes, sobs*] Don't weep; weeping people are overwhelming in this world. Weeping is not required any more.

**S**—[*wiping her tears and trying to gain courage*] Yes, Kusum, dear! I follow it now. Don't doubt thy Saroj in the least. I must obey thy command. This body is thine; this soul is thine; they are ever prepared to fulfil thy desires.

**K**—Write then, as I dictate, and send it to mamma as urgent.

[*S writes as he dictates*]

## SCENE VIII

### THIEF CAUGHT:—

[*when a similar boat is produced the thief is caught and sent to gaol. Many of the articles of J are found and handed over to him. J =Jyoti declares the interest income of the*

## Act IV] POOR MAN'S BREAD

*whole property to be used in charity for scholarships to deserving poor students, under the management of respectable local trustees. This action of his makes a remarkable change in his position in life. He gets more business. He is given the title of 'Sir' by the government. The public feeling is reflected by a grand reception. All people respect him in quite a different way, more than before. He enjoys the real beauty of life. The old flatterers dare not see him now as before]*

### SCENE IX

*OLD MA'M'S HUT:—*

*[J—Jyoti still puts up with M—the old Ma'm. He is reading the newspaper. It is just morning. A postman delivers a wire. "Dear mother! Feeling bit unwell, last few days. Wish to wear a coat, prepared by one entirely happy, of best available cloth. Come with papa soon, with it, Kusum."]*

**J**—[reading the wire] The child is a bit sick mother! and requests both of us to go there with a coat prepared by one who is entirely happy.

**M**—God protect him! Bring me the best cloth,

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act. V.

and prepare yourself for the journey. I'll manage the coat. [J gives her a piece of cloth, recently purchased for himself]

J—[getting up, and giving her a packet] This is the finest.

[M sees the cloth and seems pleased]

## ACT FIFTH

### SCENE I

*IN SEARCH:—*

[M—The old Ma'm with the piece of cloth and the wire, sets out to find the happiest people in the village and town. First she goes to her neighbour]

M—Dahi, dear! will you do this much for me and my Klusum? You are the happiest one in the world, I must say. Will you oblige me?

D—[receiving M] What is it, mamma? I'd be very glad to do anything for you.

[M shows the wire and awaits the reply. D reads it and with a sigh] Yes, but mamma, you know, my only child died just last year!

M—Ah! Dahi! excuse me, you are not so happy indeed! I must try somewhere else.

## Act VI] POOR MAN'S BREAD

**D**—Why don't you go to the Countess Induba herself? She is of a very obliging nature, too!

**M**—Thank you. But one should try one's utmost to avoid troubling great people. Good-bye! [leaves]

## SCENE II

### *A CRACK HUSBAND:—*

*[In the town on a main road, vehicles of many varieties are seen passing. About half a dozen lovely girls led by a most beautiful and lovely dressed lady, blooming in youth, having a flower basket and articles of worship in their hands are seen going to a shrine. M—The old Ma'm happy at the scene, expecting her work done, approaches the leader]*

**M**—Dear child! God bless you! I hope you are quite happy; the happiest in the world, I should say. Aren't you?

**G**—[rather perplexed at the abrupt question] Well, old mamma! What do you want? Or, take this. [showing her a coin]

**M**—[with high hope] No, child! I don't want money; nor am I hungry. Will you read this? [gives her the wire]

## PRINCIPLES OF LIFE [Act V

**G**—[reads the wire and with a sigh] Mamma! Will you wait a while? I'll be coming. [they go]

**M**—[with increased hope] Oh, God! Thou art the only great! Let people say anything of Thee. I am sure that none but Thee can conduct the world affairs. Why are people so proud of their trifling actions? [looks at the sky with half-closed eyes and hands clasped in prayer]

[*G=Ganga and others go to a shrine; worship God and return, where the old Ma'm is still praying God for help and happiness*]

**G**—[coming near] Let's go, mamma! [She takes her to her residence. All others disperse one by one. M is seated in a room in front of the kitchen. G's husband enters]

**R**—[in wrath] Ganga! Where's she gone? Tch! She won't be in the house, I am sure! [screaming] Oh, you brute! Where are you?

**G**—[coming out] Here I am, dear!

**R**—Where are the papers which I left on this table?

**G**—I know nothing of them, dear!

**R**—You never know anything. [striking his hand on the table] Where can they be? [with disgusted look] Always knowing nothing. I must teach you to know something. Is the food ready?

Act V] POOR MAN'S BREAD

**G**—Yes, dear, long it has been waiting for you.

**R**—Naughty brute! It might have become cold then, by this time.

**G**—I've kept it warm, dear!

**R**—[*untying his clothes, and after washing hands and feet, touching the food*] Hopeless! Always keeping it cold, Tch!

**G**—But you never come at the given time, dear, and I never keep you waiting! What should I do?

**R**—[*with a slap*] Don't talk any more! I don't want to hear all this from you. I know better. Why don't you keep the hearth lighted till I return?

**G**—The meals will be spoiled, dear!

**R**—Shut up! Always with a ready reply! Shame! [*washes his hands and putting on his clothes, walks away*]

**M**—[*amazed at the scene*] My darling! You seem to be too unhappy. I must try somewhere else.

**G**—That's his nature, mamma! Excuse me! I've kept you waiting so long.

[*M leaves with a sigh*]

## SCENE III

TOWN STREETS:—

**M**—[walking further] Oh, God! where is the happiness for which people seem striving every moment? I must find it out somehow.

[walks and walks through the different sections of the town and comes near a beautiful garden where a number of youthful girls clad in varying coloured suitable costumes, sing in chorus a colloquial song. Pleased at the most attractive beauty of the girls, emitting flowers of smiles as if bearing no trace of anxiety of the weary world, and charmed at their enchanting melodious tunes, the old Ma'm is filled with hope again and goes nearer]

Gracious God! Thou hast brought me to real happiness indeed! There can't exist more happiness than this. How innocent, frank-hearted they look! Wilt Thou favour me with courage enough to approach one of them and ask?

[The song is over, **M**=The old Ma'm approaches **H**=Hirakuwar the most beautiful one who led the song]

**M**—[approaching **H**] Benevolent child, you are the happiest one in the world that I have seen.

## Act V] POOR MAN'S BREAD

Aren't you?

H—It may be so, mamma! Why do you interfere in our home affairs? Do you expect anything from me? Be frank!

M—Kind-hearted child! Here is the request. [shows her the wire] He is my only son for whom I must make a request of you.

H—[with a sigh] Let's talk inside the house, mamma!

[*The other girls disperse and they both enter the garden bungalow. It's a very beautiful two storey dwelling, with a terrace on either sides, having a small one-storey erection behind, with some open space in the middle, between the two*]

M—[following H] O God! What have you destined me for? Dear child, Kusum! Where is happiness? The world has left it, I think.

[*M is seated on a seat under the terrace roof of the main bungalow, from where she can see clearly what is going on in the opposite one-storey erection*]

B—[entering] Heera! Where art thou?

H—Just a minute, mamma! [leaves M alone and receiving B=Banku, her husband] Here I am, dear!

B—[untying his coat] Bring the whip, and follow

me at once.

[*H* brings a whip, gives it to *B*—*Banku* and follows him to the one-storey erection behind. *M*—the old *Ma'm* is marking all this from her seat. *B* opens a big long box, takes out a body out of it, hangs it by the neck to a rope kept ready for the purpose, and whips it seven times in great fury, saying aloud, turning to *H*]

Look here! Here is the fruit of your actions. Shed some tears over this, your heart and soul, you wicked one!

[*H*—*Hira* trembles, closes her eyes and screams aloud in agony. Her rosy face turns pale. *M*—the old *Ma'm* seems frightened at the terror-striking scene. *B*—*Banku* puts the body again into the box, locks it up and comes down. *H* follows him. She gives him quietly a cup of milk with sugar and a spoon. *B* drinks it with joy and leaves. Regaining a bit of courage *H* comes where *M* is kept waiting]

**H**—[going near] Where is the cloth, mamma? Let me prepare the coat for your child.

**M**—[awakened as if from a gloomy dream] Are you here, *Hira*, I think I was having a most gloomy dream.

## Act V] POOR MAN'S BREAD

**H**—No, mamma, it was a fact! [with a deep sigh] It was my brother's statue whom my most suspicious husband whipped so cruelly.

**M**—[astonished] And still you dare to ask for the cloth? Hira! Will you tell me what it was?

**H**—He was transported for life, mamma, from where he escaped somehow. He sent me a letter giving me an appointment to see him in the adjoining garden. [*The actual happenings are exhibited on the screen. H=Hira in rejoicing goes to see him at the appointed time leaving the letter on the table by mistake. B reads the letter, suspects and follows her with his rifle; they meet, embrace, and kiss each other through natural affection. B=Banku takes their photos and shoots the stranger down from a distance. H=Hira screams aloud in agony, cries bitterly. B goes near her, takes her by the hair, kicks and drags her to his residence*] I went in rejoicing, talked and embraced and kissed him through natural affection; my husband followed me and seeing me with him, shot him dead. How can men suspicious by nature be convinced? He doesn't believe in what I say, and this is his daily programme. What's the good of weeping all the while, too?

**M**—Heera, darling! You are very unhappy. God bless you with happiness! Good-bye! [*she leaves*]

## SCENE IV

*THE COUNTESS:—*

**M**—[*walking further; to herself*] Ah, I am tired! Is there really no one entirely happy in the world? How can it be? The world is so wide. There must be happiness somewhere at least. Why do people long for it otherwise? Let me go to the Countess now. She is quite happy, no doubt. Health, wealth, youth, a lovely child and an affectionate husband all combined have favoured her with a remarkably enviable prosperity in life. [*She comes to a two-storey beautiful residence of the Countess Induba. It exhibits a superfine piece of architecture of the most up-to-date style. It is situated on a high level overlooking a beautiful hilly view behind and a lake in front. The worthy lady in all her grandeur is seen seated on a beautiful swing in her apartment, dressed in simple, but gorgeous costume, fanned by the female attendants. M—the old Ma'm enters the house and approaches the lady*]

Good evening, worthy lady!

**I**—[*receiving her very politely*] Welcome, mamma, good evening!

[*M is seated by her side*] Where do you come from, mamma? You seem much fatigued! [*she is served with some tea and fruits*]

Act V] POOR MAN'S BREAD

**M**—[*wiping her face with a kerchief*] God be with you, kind lady! [*takes out the wire and giving it to her*] Here's a wire from my only son, which will speak for itself.

[*I=Induba reads the wire, M takes a few pieces of fruit*]

**I**—[*with a deep sigh*] This happiness, mamma, is a mere show! God, only, knows my sufferings. When I was sick [*The scene is shown on the screen. The lady is very sick. She is struggling for life; calling the child, taking its portrait in her hand kisses it, taking it to her bosom cries again and again*] What will be thy fate, my child. [*the scene continues, showing her husband married to a second wife. The husband appeases her, gives her a promise not to get a second wife. She is not convinced. He calls a Doctor and rids himself of his manhood in her presence. His bed is also seen by her side*] He got rid of his manhood. It convinced me of my child's happiness, and gradually I got cured. [*with a sigh*] Whenever I remember his liberality and my foolishness, all this happiness pinches me on all sides. [*Her face turns pale and gloomy*]

**M**—[*with a deep sigh*] You are quite unhappy indeed, my child! People are mistaken in striving for this earthly happiness, which is really nothing

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but the polished side of misery. Excuse me! Good-bye!

[*She leaves*]

SCENE V

*THE FUNERAL:—*

[*Nation grieves the death of K=Kusum. All the citizens join his funeral procession in mourning dress. M=the old Ma'm and J=Jyoti arrive in time. They see the procession from a distance and go straight to the burial ground. The old Ma'm runs straight to K's corpse, kisses it again and again and sheds tears. S=Saroj has given birth to a male child; she is seen lying on a cot in the shrine-maternity home with half-closed eyes, feeling exhausted. The child is in a cradle. A friend of K approaches M and gives her his last letter addressed to her. The letter is exhibited on the screen*]  
“Dear mother, art thou still not convinced that the world is full of sorrow? Why, then, mourn? Thy son has done enough during the short period of his life, and now gladly embraceth death which has approached him in the guise of the nation’s cause. Rejoice! Man is mortal.

## Act V] POOR MAN'S BREAD

Some die sooner, some later. You know well, what is real happiness and what death is.

Your dearest Kusum."

**M**—[*kisses the letter with closed eyes and regaining strength*] Yes, child! I am quite convinced that the world is full of sorrows and anxieties. He alone is happy whose life is for the public. He is living indeed, the need of whose presence is felt by the nation. Death is nothing but a change in outward visible shape, I know; still, I have a motherly heart! [Her heart fails]

[*The beautiful face of the child is seen at the feet of A—Adityanath*]

Om! Om! Om!



## Suggestions for Staging or Screening “The Poor Man’s Bread”

While this English edition of “The Poor Man’s Bread and Principles of Life” portrays the characters with Indian names in a normal Indian environment, it is the hope of the Author that the play may be reproduced in many other countries, with appropriately named actors, dress, habits, actions and conduct in the social environment of the country where the play is staged or screened. In order to facilitate the staging of the play in other countries, only common actions are indicated, other more intricate ones being left to the imagination and tact of directors and producers. Special names for characters for Japanese and other stages are given on page under *Dramatis Personæ*.

It will be noted that this scenario was written for the stage and for the screen. For the stage, the scenario will be found complete in itself, while for the screen, the dialogues may be curtailed to some extent or some scenes may be shown in pantomime instead. But if the sentiment and meaning be impaired in any way, the whole beauty of the play is likely to be lost.

Over and above the recreational object, this play is intended to be educational, hence it is not necessary to add more songs, although if desired, a couple of pathetic songs may be inserted.

Schools and Colleges may freely stage this play, without seeking special permission. But staging, screening or publishing the same in any other form for money-making, special permission must be sought, as all such rights have been reserved by the Author.

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